



## Processes of reforming: The case of the Norwegian state school inspection policy frameworks

Jeffrey Brooks Hall

To cite this article: Jeffrey Brooks Hall (2018) Processes of reforming: The case of the Norwegian state school inspection policy frameworks, Education Inquiry, 9:4, 397-414, DOI: [10.1080/20004508.2017.1416247](https://doi.org/10.1080/20004508.2017.1416247)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/20004508.2017.1416247>



© 2018 The Author(s). Published by Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group.



Published online: 09 Jan 2018.



Submit your article to this journal [↗](#)



Article views: 473



View Crossmark data [↗](#)

## Processes of reforming: The case of the Norwegian state school inspection policy frameworks

Jeffrey Brooks Hall 

Department of Teacher Education and School Research, University of Oslo, Oslo, Norway

### ABSTRACT

State school inspection in Norway has undergone multiple reform initiatives from the state level, a system predominantly aimed at controlling legal compliance of school districts and individual schools. Rather than focusing on policy reform, this article draws attention to how enactment of state inspection policy has taken place through institutional and dynamic processes of reforming, within and across hierarchical levels in organisations. Theoretically, the study applies an institutional understanding of the actor-centred concepts of reforming and policy enactment. The article historically analyses how inspection policy frameworks in Norway have evolved from control and support, via mere compliance control, to more recently include modes of evaluation and potential support. Finally, the article suggests that, by focusing on the dynamic relations and processes of policy enactment, it is possible to fully capture the complexity of reforming state inspection of schools.

### KEYWORDS

Enactment; institutionalism; policy; reforming; state school inspection

### Introduction

Norwegian educational policy is highly influenced by demands, expectations, and policy launched from supranational bodies such as the Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD) and the European Union (EU). To examine key changes from a national perspective, it is thus necessary to study policy shifts in view of trending international policy processes, documents, and regulation (Karseth, Møller, & Aasen, 2013; Møller, 2014; Ozga, Dahler-Larsen, Segerholm, & Simola, 2011). Moreover, international agencies such as the OECD have, through international assessment systems such as the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), led to an increase in reform work aimed at improving student outcomes funnelled by growth in school inspection regimes, among other efforts (Brown, McNamara, O'Hara, & O'Brien, 2016).

As part of the proliferation of the multifaceted and performative reform ideas of neo-liberalism, generalised as New Public Management (NPM), such a movement furthermore implies a shift from classic public administration to management and managerialism (Gunter, Grimaldi, Hall, & Serpieri, 2016; Skedsmo & Møller, 2016). To which

**CONTACT** Jeffrey Brooks Hall  [jeffreyh@ils.uio.no](mailto:jeffreyh@ils.uio.no)  Department of Teacher Education and School Research, University of Oslo. Hall P.O. Box 1099 Blindern, 0317 Oslo, Norway

This article is based on an unpublished trial lecture held in conjunction with a doctoral defence at the University of Oslo on 6 December 2016.

© 2018 The Author(s). Published by Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group.

This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

extent the governing tools of NPM have become part of different countries' governments varies widely between nations, and are "packaged in different ways" (Gunter et al., 2016, p. 11; Hood, 2007). In the Norwegian case, regular, state school inspection was introduced in 2006 as part of a National Quality Assessment System (QAS<sup>1</sup>), alongside a battery of other tools aimed at governing the education sector (Skedsmo, 2009).

To grasp the complexity of major changes in inspection reform and policy in the Norwegian realm, I draw on existing research literature to argue that it is necessary to look further abroad at other European changes in educational policy and reform trajectories (Lawn & Grek, 2012). As demonstrated by multiple researchers, nation states draw on a common set of policy ideas, conveyed through processes of "borrowing and lending" (Steiner-Khamsi & Waldow, 2012). A key organisation in this development is the Standing International Conference of Inspectorates (SICI), where Norwegian education authorities have attained ideas in their quest to develop their own state inspection frameworks (Grek, 2015; Hall, 2016; Lawn & Grek, 2012; Segerholm, 2012).

At the same time, these shifts in inspection policy, even though highly influenced by global ideas, often vary between states due to national traditions in attempts to solve common problems (Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2011; Steiner-Khamsi, 2010). Finally, on the macro- and micro-levels, these movements are subject to interpretation and then consequently put into practice (Ball, Maguire, & Braun, 2012). Based on a historical analysis of key policy documents, this article more specifically addresses dynamic policy processes on three levels of government; (a) state level, (b) regional and county level, and, to some extent, (c) the local level. However, the focus point is how school inspectors on the regional and (later) the county levels have over time observed, interpreted, and enacted state inspection policy.

Using Norwegian state school inspection as a case example, the guiding question for this article is: How can the enactment of state inspection policy be viewed through dynamical processes of reforming, rather than focusing on reform initiatives alone? Drawing on key concepts of reform, reforming, and enactment, as well as recent literature studies on school inspection, the main argument in this article is that educational reform involves more than mere policy initiatives from state policy actors, seeking to trigger changes in the institutional fabrics of school districts, municipalities, and individual schools through use of various governing tools such as inspection (Ball et al., 2012; Baxter, Grek, & Segerholm, 2015; Brown et al., 2016; Courtney, 2016; Hall, 2016; Hood, 2007; Lindgren, Hult, Segerholm, & Rönnerberg, 2012; Rönnerberg, 2011; Spillane, 2004; Supovitz & Weinbaum, 2008).

Conceptually, this article focuses on institutional processes of policy enactment, rather than reform implementation (Ball et al., 2012; Jepperson, 1991). Moving beyond seeing policy as mere reform implementation requires an understanding of policy enactment as something non-linear, processual, and dynamic, taking place in institutions between actors such as school principals and state school inspectors (Ball, 1994; Ball et al., 2012). Jepperson (1991) defines an institution as "... a social order or pattern that has attained a certain state or property" (Jepperson, 1991, p. 145). In this article, institutions are broadly understood as "socially constructed bodies in which individuals act, thus collectively shaping the micro-societies in which they carry out their everyday tasks" (Hall, 2016, p. 41). Thus, this article argues that the concept of implementation draws attention away from the fact that policy processes are seldom rational-linear,

rather involving constant sense-making, interpretation, deliberation, and renegotiation between policy actors (Ball et al., 2012; Ozga, 2000; Weick, 1979).

Moreover, reforming not only implies focusing on the policy reforms themselves, but highlights dynamic processes of policy enactment (Ball, 1994; Bowe, Ball, & Gold, 1992; Brunsson & Olsen, 1993; Weick, 1979). Drawing on Berger and Luckmann (1966), enactment requires policy actors to “construct the social reality in which there are part of” (Hall, 2016, p. 23). Such enactment may ultimately lead to changes in how, in our case, state school inspections are carried out in a practical sense on the local level.

In several studies, researchers have conceptualised reform as political and/or ideological initiatives from the central, state level, whilst they have viewed policy documents as not only expressions of reform, but also as being materialised through processual texts and enacted (Ball et al., 2012; Ozga, 2000). Thus, even if educational reform may be an overarching goal seen from the political level, reforming from an institutional stance examines more specifically how educational policy is a result of processes of enactment. Here, key actors in institutions, such as school inspectors and school principals, must contemplate, interpret, and employ the legal foundations as well as current policy and inspection frameworks. Finally, inspection frameworks may be defined as an infrastructure of rules, which:

regulate the inspectors’ practice through prescribing which information should be included, as well as how it is to be systematically and deliberately collected, as well as what type of relation and distance there should be between inspectors and those inspected. (Baxter et al., 2015, p. 74)

This article is structured as follows: First, I have laid out my understanding of the topic, made the necessary refinements, and positioned it within an international research context. Next, I will present an overview of some of the main trends in school inspection studies. Third, I will discuss the conceptual framework, and briefly outline the methodological approach in the article. I then analyse major educational reforms, specifically the history and processes of reforming state school inspection policy. Finally, I will sum up the article and present some of the implications as well as identify gaps in current research on state school inspection in the case of Norway.

### **Research on state school inspection: modes of control and support**

Internationally, school inspection has attracted interest from many researchers, where a range of conceptual, country-case, and empirical accounts have been published in ranked journals and anthologies (Hall, 2016). In this review section, I present a purposive selection of studies in the field of research on this phenomenon, situating the case of Norwegian state school inspection within an international research context. As will be addressed in the historical analysis following the methodological section, there have been several cyclical shifts in the Norwegian framework between modes of control and support, also shown in studies of other national contexts (see, for example, Aguerrondo & Vezub, 2011; Ozga, Segerholm, & Lawn, 2015; Sivesind, Skedsmo, & Hall, 2016).

A point of departure is the English inspection system, under the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services, and Skills (Ofsted). As shown in several key studies Ofsted inspections may evoke teachers' losing their sense of power and control over their own situation, under a regime of performativity and high-stakes accountability (see, for example, Perryman, 2006, 2007). Courtney (2016) moreover examined how school principals experience becoming "exposed to all" through a post-panoptic system where schools are prone to market control and performance.

Far from the English policy context, the Scottish inspectorate has chosen a different reform trajectory than its neighbour, under the "Education Scotland" regime. Lawn and Grek (2012), Baxter et al. (2015), and Ozga et al. (2015) have demonstrated that a major trait of the recent framework has been an elevated level of trust in school self-evaluation (SSE), as well as developmental modes of governing. Studies also suggest that other inspection authorities, such as in the Norwegian case, are influenced by the Scottish system when reforming their own inspection frameworks (Ozga et al., 2015).

Beyond Europe, studies have addressed various forms of inspection and supervision commonly found in many countries, embracing many of the same ideals, frameworks, and measures as in European inspection systems. One example here is De Grauwe's (2007) review of inspection and evaluation systems in several western and central African countries such as Uganda and Mali, suggesting the need to combine inspection visits through not only controlling legal compliance, but also offering support and guidance to schools, school principals, and teachers. Another example is Aguerrondo and Vezub's (2011) study of inspection, leadership, and school improvement in Latin American countries such as Argentina and Chile. As also shown by Aguerrondo and Vezub (2011), supporting schools in the inspection process is a key factor for the promotion of teachers' development and educational change (Aguerrondo & Vezub, 2011, p. 705).

In Sweden, Rönnerberg (2011) studied how the Swedish state has reconfigured its strategy of control of private and public schools, balancing between marketisation and harsher control strategies. Lindgren (2015) demonstrated how school inspectors based their judgments seen from the "front stage" on either evidence-based reasoning or on adaption and professional judgment seen from the "backstage". Finally, Carlbaum et al. (2014) discussed how school inspection has increasingly become a key way of governing schools, in a system prone to excessive juridification.

Until recently, research on the Norwegian example has been less reported than many other country cases (Hall, 2016). In studies of the former inspection regime, researchers have highlighted modes of system revision and compliance control (Sivesind, 2009; Sivesind & Bachmann, 2011). In addition, Helgøy and Homme's (2006) early study demonstrated how inspection, as one of many government tools, is vital in the governing of schools. A recent historical examination of the period stretching from 2002 to 2012 showed how policy and legal statutes concerning Norwegian state school inspection portrayed modes of professional-bureaucratic control, for example through the Education Act (Government Act, 1998) (Hall & Sivesind, 2015). Conversely, the same study suggested clear traces of performance-based evaluation in state inspection policy during the same period, especially expressed in various Green papers and public reports.

Holm and Møller (2016) as well as Andenæs (2016) studied the recent state inspection framework (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training [UDIR], 2013b).

Holm and Møller (2016) drew two conclusions. First, schools adjust their practices in accordance with demands put forth in reports from inspection authorities. Second, inspection is necessary as an external tool to maintain certain standards, such as ensuring individual students' rights. Additionally, Andenæs (2016) concluded that the current inspection handbook (UDIR, 2013b) serves as a useful tool for authorities and school leaders; however, Andenæs (2016) highlighted that certain sections of the material are challenging and unclear to relate to for these actors. One of the main concerns is the fact that the handbook seemingly builds on unrealistic images of users' legal competence and their individual, specific areas of expertise. This may make it difficult to enact the handbook on the practical level in schools, municipalities, or even within inspection teams. Thus, such dynamic processes open for professional discretion and ample leeway to manoeuvre for the policy actors involved (Hall, 2017a; Ottesen & Møller, 2016).

### **Conceptual framework: reforming education and the role of policy enactment**

Considering reform and acts of reforming, there are four pertinent questions which will be addressed in this section: (a) What is reform? (b) What differs reform from reforming? (c) How does reforming take place? (d) Who takes part in these processes of reforming?

To address the first two questions, the article draws on the work by new-institutionalists Brunsson and Olsen (1993), who define reform as “deliberate attempts to improve a [certain] aspect of organisational structure or process” (p. 33). They further noted reforms often occur and reoccur in modern organisations (Brunsson & Olsen, 1993). Thus, reforms, even if they are initiated on the state level, undergo dynamical processes of change on the local, institutional (for example municipal) levels. Subsequently, such enactment of educational policy involves policy actors not only on the central level, but also down to individual counties, municipalities, and schools (Ball, 1994; Ball et al., 2012).

Another way of defining reform is through the work of Hansson (1991), who viewed reforms as natural evolutions and shifts in society, either slowly or more rapidly evolving. Such shifts, in line with Brunsson and Olsen (1993), involve actors taking part in the policy process both through policymaking and in the enactment of key policy texts such as state curricula or inspection frameworks. As already mentioned, in this article, enactment of policy goes beyond implementation, viewing policy as a process, “subject to different ‘interpretations’ as it is enacted [rather than implemented] in original and creative ways within institutions and classrooms” (Ball et al., 2012, p. 2).

Third, I will address the question of how educational reforms, and more especially processes of reforming take place. Previous studies have mentioned global impulses and reform ideas (Dale & Robertson, 2009). Through multiple reforming activities in education, there have been attempts to form schools according to the ideals of what modern organisations should look like; in short, certain managerial “recipes” where a “one-size-fits-all” rationale have been employed, seeing schools as organisations in line with hospitals or consulting firms (Gunter et al., 2016). In addition, new reforms in education often arise as results of critique of past reforms, and policymakers rationalise new reforms as solutions to failure of former policy agendas (Cuban, 1990). Cuban (1990) also questioned the notion of formal-bureaucratic rationality in policymaking,

which relies on two images, the pendulum and the cycle, both of which are flawed. He moreover offers two alternative perspectives, one being a political perspective explained through concepts such as value conflicts, another an institutional perspective, focusing on actors and processes. Thus, drawing on Cuban (1990), Ball et al. (2012), and Gunter et al. (2016), I choose to follow an institutional perspective of reforms, reforming, and policy, seen in relation to political initiatives for educational change.

Furthermore, Bowe et al. (1992) argued that a “separation between investigations of the generation and the implementation of policy” (p. 7) has tended to focus more on seeing policy as merely a managerial and rational-bureaucratic process. Furthermore, instead of focusing on reforms as merely state control, there exists three primary policy contexts (Bowe et al., 1992; see Figure 1<sup>2</sup>). First is the context of influence, where public policy is initiated and where discourses are constructed, such as in the Ministry of Education or the OECD. Secondly, the context of text production leads to policy texts such as White Papers or national curricula. Finally, and third, is the context of practice, where policy is not merely received and implemented, but subject to ongoing interpretation and recreation (Bowe et al., 1992, p. 22). Actions in this context may take place, for example, when state school inspectors, local educational authorities, school principals, and teachers together interpret and translate the current state inspection handbook (UDIR, 2013b).

By focusing on how actors actively contribute to processes of reforming within organisations and across “contexts of practice”, it is possible to view policy shifts as something not characterised as large-scale and rapid, fast-paced, or quickly absorbed (Bowe et al., 1992). On the contrary, shifts in policy may rather be explained as a set of intricate, small steps, gradually seeping into the institutional cracks of loosely-coupled organisations, which may eventually lead to new practices (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; March & Olsen, 2010; Ottesen, 2013). Finally, as pointed out by several researchers, reforms in the Norwegian case to a significant extent evolve in the tension between regulation and professional discretion (Ottesen, 2013).

In addition, processes of reform may derive from multiple factors, characterised by being either external or internal. External factors are key factors in understanding dynamic policy processes; for example, such external factors may occur on the system or state level, or they may be based on ideology or initiated from internal agencies such as the EU, OECD, or the Standing International Conference of Inspectorates (SICI), are all contributing key factors in understanding dynamic policy processes (Lawn & Grek, 2012). Conversely, internal factors focus on individuals and groups of actors as well as processes which are value-driven. These processes may over time lead to institutionalisation (Bleiklie, 2001). As outlined in the introduction, policy shifts may moreover derive through networks on the transnational and national levels, or through processes of Europeanisation as part of the European Educational Policy Space (EEPS) (Lawn & Grek, 2012; Steiner-Khamsi, 2010).

Finally, I will address the question as to which policy actors on the national level take part in processes of reforming of state inspection policy. Multiple actors (either external and transnational, or internal and national) on various levels in society contribute to policy processes. In this sense, such processes include a diverse mixture of networks of actors, both within and across institutional contexts, as well as discourses, interpretations, and flows of knowledge (Ozga et al., 2011). An example of such a process is where

school inspectors function as institutional entrepreneurs, thus actively contributing to the forming and reforming state inspection policy (Hall, 2017a; Hardy & Maguire, 2008). As pointed out earlier in the introduction, the focus of this article is how school inspectors on the regional and (later) the county level have over time observed, interpreted, and enacted state inspection policy. Thus, building upon reforms, reforming, and contexts of reforming in a conceptual sense, I will later address the case of reforming Norwegian state school inspection within (and across) “contexts of practice” (Bowe et al., 1992). However, first, a note on choice of research methodology in the study will now follow.

### Research methodology in the study

As pointed out by Scott (1990), documents may in a wide sense be considered as written texts (1990, p. 12). Documentary analysis, according to Fitzgerald (2012), is “a form of qualitative analysis that requires researchers to locate, interpret, analyse, and draw conclusions about the evidence presented” (2012, p. 298). The primary data in this article are relevant policy documents such as White Papers, Green Papers, and state curricula, as well as historical, personal accounts from state policy actors.

Most documents included in the analysis were retrieved from official sources such as government websites on the ministry or directorate level. The documents were examined according to four types of criteria: (a) authenticity, (b) credibility, (c) representativeness, and (d) meaning (Fitzgerald, 2012; Scott, 1990). In addition, historical, personal narratives were included in the study to bring additional voice to the overall selection of data material (Mediås, 1996).

Not only were the selected texts regarded as merely authoritative texts. In line with the conceptual framework outlined above, the documents are viewed as both “text and action” and therefore represent “what is enacted as well as what is intended” (Ball, 1994, p. 10). Specifically, this implies that text production takes place through interaction between actors on the central, regional/county, municipal, as well as school levels, thus representing both “policy as text” and “policy as discourse” (Ball, 1994). These pieces of text provide the researcher knowledge of how “institutions work, and what values and practices guide decision making” (Fitzgerald, 2012, p. 297). In short, the range of documents personal accounts were interpreted and analysed according to key themes emerging in the texts; such as control, support, development and evaluation.

### Reforming Norwegian state school inspection: a historical analysis

I have argued that, through focusing on reforming as something which is state-initiated, but regionally and locally enacted, an actor-centred perspective is necessary. Furthermore, the enactment of educational reform in general, and more specifically state school inspection policy, implies to a considerable extent more than mere formal-bureaucratic or managerial implementation on the regional or municipal level. In the Norwegian case, key actors such as educational directors, school inspectors, and school principals together engage in the enactment of state inspection policy (Hall, 2017a). Focus in this analysis is on the “context of practice”, where key policy actors must interpret and recreate regulation and inspection frameworks (Bowe et al., 1992). As moreover pointed out by Bowe et al. (1992), policies



may be regarded as textual interventions, “but also carry with them both material constraints and possibilities” (1992, p. 21).

State school inspection is by no means new in Norway. Inspection can be traced back to at least the mid-1800s, when trained theologians supervised schools throughout the country. As a starting point, Mediås (1996) doctoral thesis on the history of the regional school directors in Norway has played a key role in the body of research on what was later to become state school inspection. At a time when Norway was still in union with neighbouring Sweden, the Office of the School Directors (“Skoledirektørembetet”) was granted wide responsibilities to follow up individual schools, once the new Education Act of 1860 (Government Act, 1860) was passed (Mediås, 1996). A note here is that there were only male directors up until 1981. In 1860, all six of the first school directors had as one of their key qualifications theological studies from university level, thus making them members of the elite in Norwegian society. The towns of Tromsø, Trondheim, Bergen, and Hamar had one office each, while Christiania (Oslo) had two offices.

As a representative of the state, each school director had among his many tasks to supervise and control that every school used state funding as intended. Additionally, their positions led to frequent travels throughout each of their districts. One of the first school directors, J. Berg from Trondheim, wrote in his 1862 notes entitled “On inspection”: “School at Aal near Rygh. Teacher NN, seminar candidate. Cannot explain well, [however] better in song. Also writing is well. The classroom ceiling is low” (Mediås, 1996, p. 113).

However, just as important as controlling the quality of instruction and teaching facilities, the directors offered pedagogical guidance and support to schools, thus actively shaping policy within the “context of practice”. In another official account, school director P. J. Coucheron from Tromsø reported in 1868 that a typical school visit would last for more than four hours, where one to two hours were allocated for pedagogical discussions with the teachers under scrutiny (Mediås, 1996, p. 114). Thus, the difficult balance between control and support that challenged state officials during the late 19th century remains prevalent in today’s system of regional County Governors’ Offices (Hall, 2017a). Finally, the school directors’ significant roles as state educational supervisors, administrators, advisors, and controllers were gradually strengthened and continued for more than 130 years, despite being subject to certain shifts through educational reforms, and more importantly through processes of reforming.

During the first four decades of the 20th century, pedagogues and politicians took over the functions that the theologians had previously filled, in the wake of multiple major reforms in the Norwegian educational sector. After the dissolution of the union between Norway and Sweden in 1905, development of the educational sector evolved rapidly throughout the 1920s, leading to new state curricula in 1922 and 1926 for rural and urban schools, and eventually culminating in the “Normalplan” of 1939 (Sivesind, 2008). The role of the school directors was also expanded, and they actively took part in reforming work, controlling legal compliance in schools, and as pedagogical advisors, all on behalf of the state. In 1964, there were 18 school director’s offices on the county level, in all comprising 72 full-time employees. In the 1970s and 1980s, more supportive and developmental modes were employed by the school directors’ offices, offering advice and contributing to school development programs, whereas modes of controlling seem to have almost vanished (Telhaug, 1997, p. 90).

Eventually, changes in the governing role of the state, as well as decentralisation and an increase in municipal powers and autonomy, led to closure of these offices (Telhaug, 1997). In 1992, the regional school directors had their final formal assembly, where Labour Party Minister of Education G. Hernes announced that the 132 years of the regional school directors' history were over, due to "governmental restructuring" (Mediås, 1996, p. 565). Moreover, White Paper no. 37 (1991) "Organising and governing in the educational sector" had already recommended that the regional school directors were to be substituted with the State Educational Offices ("Statens utdanningskontorer") in each county, which were established in August of 1992.

In the new millennium "the evaluative state" was expanding, partially funnelled through NPM ideals leading to renewal of the public sector (Neave, 1998; Skedsmo & Møller, 2016). Throughout the 2000s, a new Quality Assessment System (QAS) framework for the educational sector was developed, leading to new toolsets and quality indicators being administered to schools, such as national testing and the annual Student Survey (Skedsmo, 2009). One explanation for this growth were the substandard results on the first PISA tests in 2000, as well as an OECD report published in 1989. The report highly criticised the Norwegian, public school system for lacking sufficient systems for following up local school authorities and individual schools (The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], 1989). The recent 2015 PISA results however showed continued improvement in the Norwegian case (Kjærnsli & Jensen, 2016).

Representing to some extent part of the quality assessment system (QAS), regular, state school inspection was launched in 2006, alongside an array of other governing tools in the QAS such as national testing, which were used in controlling and benchmarking the quality of schools (Sivesind et al., 2016, p. 107). The 17 County governors' offices were from then on in charge of overseeing all public schools in each of their respective counties, whilst private schools were handled directly by The Directorate for Education and Training (UDIR).

The legal basis for regular, state inspection is found in section 14–1 of the Education Act (Government Act, 1998, §14–1), which states: "The Country Governor supervises the municipal and county [educational] authorities' fulfilment of the duties bestowed upon them". Briefly speaking, the key role of the county governor is to ensure that the legal practices of school authorities on the county and municipal levels, as well as school principals, are in line with demands put forth with the law (Hall & Sivesind, 2015).

As highlighted in the review section of this article, a key study of the "ancien régime" of the inspection framework in the mid 2000s and up to 2010 demonstrated how state inspection of schools mainly focused on generic methods of system revision and compliance (Sivesind, 2009; Sivesind & Bachmann, 2011). The need for a renewed inspection system was followed up in White Paper no. 31 "Quality in schools" (2007–2008), which not only advocates the system-revision and compliance-based methods, but also champions the need for evaluation and support of schools, such as in the case of the Swedish State School Inspectorate (Hall & Sivesind, 2015).

The Norwegian inspection system has throughout the last decade undergone a range of shifts, thus reforming the inspection frameworks which are used to structure and execute the inspection process. As argued above, within these shifts in policy frameworks, key actors in the "context of practice", such as school inspectors from the county

governors' offices, must relate to, interpret, and act upon documents such as legal statutes, regulation, inspection handbooks, and official reports (Hall, 2017b).

Other national contexts are also characterised by the prevalence of frequent changes in state inspection frameworks (Baxter et al., 2015). Through such frameworks, several sets of tools are used to collect data on targeted schools, such as SSE, which is increasingly becoming a key part of the inspection process in Norway. Drawing on the concept of frameworks (Baxter et al., 2015), I will in the last section of the analysis focus on key shifts in state school inspection frameworks in Norway since 2008 (Sivesind et al., 2016). Discussing such shifts is important to understand the direction in which state school inspection in Norway seems to be moving.

I will here argue that shifting regulatory frameworks, and how they are enacted, represent vital elements in the reforming process of Norwegian school inspection. In the case of Norway, this was demonstrated in a recent empirical study of school inspectors and education directors, highlighting the fact that these actors function as change agents and entrepreneurs, continuously contributing to the development of school inspection practice through enactment of inspection frameworks (Hall, 2017a; Hardy & Maguire, 2008). Another recent analysis of inspection frameworks and handbooks identified numerous reform trajectories in state school inspection, one of which lasted from 2008–2010, a second from 2010–2012, and finally, a third from 2013 and onwards, as represented by the current inspection handbook (Sivesind et al., 2016).

The first framework of the 2000s (UDIR, 2007), apart from the Education Act (Government Act, 1998), drew on a 37-page document outlining procedures for regular state school inspection, including guidelines for how the county officers should carry out their tasks. These procedures consisted of two sections, the first covering minimum standards and legal comments, while the second described the method of system revision procedures which were then widely standardised for all part of public administration, not only in education. The main task for the officers at the time was to uncover any legal irregularities in schools or municipalities, pointing out what needed to be corrected to pass inspection. Institutions subject to supervision were subsequently required to make improvements in their own procedures, and the school districts had to oversee that these amendments were done. Thus, internal control on the municipal and county levels was emphasised, based on whether the target was compulsory or upper-secondary schooling. There was at no point any political ambition under the first framework to supply a comprehensive quality assessment of the schools under scrutiny.

The second framework in the 2000s, the Instructions for Regular State Inspection (UDIR, 2010), quite dramatically changed the focus for state supervision. The focus point derived the government's program to improve students' individual right to a sufficient and healthy psycho-social working environment, articulated in section 9a-3 of the Education Act (Government Act, 1998, §9a-3). Here, it is possible to observe a shift towards more dynamic examination of substantial aspects of the schools' inner administrative and social-pedagogical processes. Additionally, inspection was also expanded to include a wider selection of documentation and written procedures which schools were required to furnish prior to the inspection visit. The inspectors were, as today, required to report on individual schools and not only school districts on the system level, such as in the case of the former framework.

Turning to the current handbook and framework for inspection, several clear changes can be observed. The third framework (UDIR, 2013a) may be divided into two stages, or cycles. The first version (1.1), consisting of 35 pages, functioned for a brief, preliminary period before the current inspection handbook was piloted and employed in 2013. Version 1.1 (UDIR, 2013a) is not so well-documented in existing research literature, but represents a provisional taste of what was to come. This article will, however, concentrate on the latter of the two.

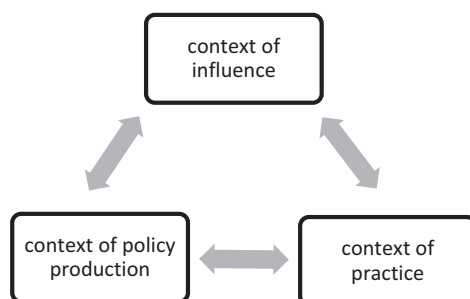
The first characteristic of the fourth and newest handbook (UDIR, 2013b) is the very size of it. Exceeding 100 pages with multiple attachments, the handbook not only focuses on controlling the legal compliance of individual schools and kindergartens, but also promotes that inspectors should offer advice and guidance to schools. However, it is unclear to what extent this occurs on the municipal and regional levels. Since the regional county governor inspectors are obliged to strict reporting systems to their superiors (i.e. UDIR), supporting schools seems for distinct reasons to be a challenging task to follow up on the practical level (Hall, 2017a, 2017b).

The recent inspection framework and handbook (UDIR, 2013b) also include an array of fixed templates, which both guide and steer communication throughout the inspection process (Hall, 2017b). The handbook, its many attachments, and accompanying templates are all available on UDIR's webpage. School principals (and kindergarten leaders) are encouraged to utilise these tools to improve their routines and procedures in case of an upcoming round of inspection. Finally, each of the county governors' offices also holds annual, regional meetings, where school districts and school principals are invited to seminars where the mandate and process of state inspection is presented. In summary, these shifts in the inspection framework represent a more communicative approach to inspection between the "auditors and the auditees" (Power, 1997), even though actual communication between inspectors, on the one hand, and principals and teachers, on the other hand, still seems relatively asymmetrically structured (Hall, 2017b).

Finally, a third key shift in the current cycle to be highlighted is the targeting of the formative assessment routines of schools and their students, regarding legal standards put forth in state regulation (Regulation, 2006). One of the new tools recently employed is the collection of survey responses from students at schools under scrutiny. These responses are used in preparation for interviews with their subject teachers as well as the schools' formal leaders (Hall, 2017b). As will be shortly discussed, this may imply that inspectors will gradually move towards more substantial matters taking place on the individual classroom level.

## Discussion and concluding remarks

The guiding question for this article has been: How can the enactment of state inspection policy be viewed through dynamical processes of reforming, rather than focusing on reform initiatives alone? I have first argued that processes of reforming focus on how policy actors, such as school inspectors and school principals, must relate to, interpret, and enact state policy. These institutional processes take place in what Bowe et al. (1992) coined the "context of practice" (see, Figure 1), where actors function as entrepreneurial change agents (Hardy & Maguire, 2008). As also shown by Ozga (2000), policy is a process, not merely a product, which involves extensive discursive negotiation by actors



**Figure 1.** Policy contexts (Bowe et al., 1992, p. 20, courtesy of authors).

outside formalised hierarchies of policy-making (Ozga, 2000, p. 2). Moreover, as further argued by Supovitz and Weinbaum (2008), processes of reforming policy take place through adjustments “repeatedly as they are introduced into and work their way through school environments (Supovitz & Weinbaum, 2008, p. 153, cited in Ball et al., 2012). Since key policy actors, such as officials from the Norwegian county governors’ offices, enact state policy, inspection frameworks, and legal statutes, they function as active contributors to the shaping of state school inspection policy in “contexts of practice” (Hall, 2016). Thus, such practices of reforming rely on the public official, such as the school inspector, having to interpret and make deliberations within the boundaries of their legal mandate, together with the framework encircling the inspection processes (Hall, 2017a).

Secondly, I have addressed that shifts in state inspection policy occur in relation to international tendencies and influences, as well as because of national traditions (Steiner-Khamsi, 2010). Examples of such shifts are the school inspection policy frameworks of neighbouring Norway and Sweden, which have over time chosen different trajectories (Hall & Sivesind, 2015). Nevertheless, why has Norway chosen a specific trajectory regarding reforming state school inspection, despite the proliferation of NPM ideas, as well as influences of globalisation, Europeanisation, and the spread of ideas from SICI? Even if Norway has chosen a somewhat “light” version of NPM, where little is at stake in comparison to more high-stakes environments (Elstad, 2009; Skedsmo & Møller, 2016), there is a movement towards new and more innovative ways of assessing the quality of schools, through various materials such as the current inspection handbook. Through such a shift, inspectors are moving closer to the classroom than previously, taking on a performative approach to the inspection practice (Hall, 2017b, 2017c).

Such shifts in reform and policy often precede new regulations and adjustments in legal statutes, which school principals, for example, must relate to in their everyday work (Andenæs & Møller, 2016). In addition, school principals in the Nordic countries such as Norway are often trapped in the crossfire between national goals and local policy initiatives, since state reforms are not always accompanied by necessary economic resources (Nihlfors & Johansson, 2014, p. 15).

Under a strong belief in the unitary state as an active policymaker and authority, with clear legitimacy and powers, individual counties and municipalities nevertheless do have leeway to navigate within the law (Hall, 2017c). Moreover, even if issues such as continuous substandard test scores on national testing, or critical remarks on state

school inspection reports do not directly lead to school principals losing their positions or schools being closed, there are nevertheless clear implications for the parties involved (Gunnulfsen & Møller, 2017; Skedsmo & Møller, 2016).

As in the case of Norway, inspection frameworks across Europe have undergone numerous changes in their configurations and are today not only geared towards controlling legal compliance, but also include developmental functions aimed towards supporting and improving schools (Brown et al., 2016). As shown in the historical material presented, such a difficult balance was commonplace even a century and a half ago, when school directors struggled to fulfil their role as controllers of the law while striving to offer pedagogical advice and support to schools and school teachers under scrutiny (Mediås, 1996). This brings us back to a second example of early written accounts by one of the school directors' offices in the late 19th century, where director J. H. Berg noted in 1868 the following upon one of his many travels in the Trondheim district: "Teacher NN did not lack capabilities, but [the] love and interest for education. During a conversation with him, concerning such discontent, I [however] sympathise with him, blaming everybody else, as he would not recognise any personal mistake" (Mediås, 1996, p. 113).

In White Paper no. 20 (2013), entitled "On the Right Track", legal support and guidance should be offered to schools as part of the inspection process, in addition to compliance control (Hall, 2016; White Paper no. 20, 2013). This would clearly be in line with what early inspectors under the school directors' regime would have understood as part of their professional mandate (Mediås, 1996). However, the recent White Paper no. 21 (2017) from the Ministry of Education and Research, "Desire to Learn – Early Intervention and Quality in Schools", did to little extent follow up on this previous line of reasoning, even if the current inspection handbook (UDIR, 2013b) encourages such a supportive approach. Thus, enactment and acts of reforming are, to a significant extent, in the hands of policy actors such as state school inspectors.

Several researchers have pointed out that inspection frameworks increasingly focus on the use of SSE, where schools report on their own performance targets which are included in the overall data collection process of inspection (Baxter et al., 2015; Huber, 2011; Rönnerberg, 2011). In the Norwegian case, state authorities have also employed their own approach to inspection, including not only quality assessment but also the use of SSE, implying an approach including both purposive and evaluative modes of governing (Hall & Sivesind, 2015).

Finally, researching a moving target, such as Norwegian state school inspection, has turned out to be a challenging task, especially since the current system has in many ways still not settled (Hall, 2016). Hence, this phenomenon is continuously adjusting to the state's need to combine control of legal practices, as well as the ambition to offer advice to school authorities, school principals, and teachers. Further research, I believe, should look at the relations between inspection authorities from the county governors' offices, school principals, and teachers. An interesting point of focus would, for example, be to examine to what extent inspection reports, either being positive or negative, are used to further develop primary and secondary education, thus taking on a more developmental approach to monitoring educational facilities. Such studies would imply a longitudinal approach to school inspection studies (Dederling & Müller, 2011).

In my point of view, the main challenge for today's schools is to ensure that they fully observe equal opportunities and the individual legal rights of all students to

acquire sufficient education. Thus, in line with research discussed in this article, school inspection may then serve as an important set of tools to both control and support schools in this challenging endeavour.

## Notes

1. This was changed in 2012, from the National Quality Assurance System (NQAS) to the Quality Assurance System (QAS).
2. The author wishes to thank professor Stephen J. Ball for the use of [Figure 1](#).

## Acknowledgments

The author wishes to thank fellow members of the research group “Curriculum Studies, Leadership, and Educational Governance” (CLEG) at the University of Oslo for their constructive suggestions on this article.

## Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author.

## Notes on contributor

*Jeffrey Brooks Hall* is a postdoctoral research fellow at the Department of Teacher Education and School Research, University of Oslo, Norway. His main research interests include education policy, school inspection, and educational leadership. Hall currently leads the project “Professional norms, school leadership and educational law: A comparative study of Norway and Sweden” (PRONLED).

## ORCID

Jeffrey Brooks Hall  <http://orcid.org/0000-0003-2142-2010>

## References

- Aguerro, I., & Vezub, L. (2011). Leadership for effective school improvement: Support for schools and teachers’ professional development in the Latin American region. In T. Townsend & J. MacBeath (Eds.), *International handbook of leadership for learning* (pp. 691–715). Dordrecht: Springer.
- Andenæs, K. (2016). Metode for tilsyn – en juridisk og rettssoziologisk vurdering av hjelpemidler for gjennomføring av tilsyn i skolen [Methods for inspection: a legal and socio-legal assessment of tools used in inspection of schools]. In K. Andenæs & J. Møller (Eds.), *Retten i skolen – mellom pedagogikk, jus og politikk* [Legal issues in schools: Between pedagogy, law, and politics] (pp. 123–137). Oslo: Universitetsforlaget.
- Andenæs, K., & Møller, J. (Eds.). (2016). *Retten i skolen – mellom pedagogikk, jus og politikk* [Legal issues in schools: Between pedagogy, law, and politics]. Oslo: Universitetsforlaget.
- Ball, S. J. (1994). *Education reform: A critical and post-structural approach*. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Ball, S. J., Maguire, M., & Braun, A. (2012). *How schools do policy: Policy enactment in secondary schools*. Oxon: Routledge.

- Baxter, J. A., Grek, S., & Segerholm, C. (2015). Regulatory frameworks: Shifting frameworks, shifting criteria. In S. Grek & J. Lindgren (Eds.), *Governing by inspection* (pp. 74–95). Oxon: Routledge.
- Berger, P., & Luckmann, T. (1966). *The social construction of reality - A treatise in the sociology of knowledge*. New York, NY: Doubleday Anchor.
- Bleiklie, I. (2001). Towards European convergence of higher education policy. *Higher Education Management, 13*(3), 9–29.
- Bowe, R., Ball, S. J., & Gold, A. (1992). *Reforming education and changing schools: Case studies in political sociology*. Oxon: Routledge.
- Brown, M., McNamara, G., O'Hara, J., & O'Brien, S. (2016). Exploring the changing face of school inspections. *Eurasian Journal of Educational Research, 66*, 1–26. doi:10.14689/ejer.2016.66.1
- Brunsson, N., & Olsen, J. P. (1993). *The reforming organization*. Oxon: Routledge.
- Carlbaum, S., Hult, A., Lindgren, J., Novak, J., Rönning, L., & Segerholm, C. (2014). Skolinspektion som styrning [School inspection as governing]. *Utbildning och demokrati, 23*(1), 5–20.
- Courtney, S. J. (2016). Post-panopticism and school inspection in England. *British Journal of Sociology of Education, 37*(4), 623–642. doi:10.1080/01425692.2014.965806
- Cuban, L. (1990). Reforming again, again, and again. *Educational Researcher, 19*(1), 3–13. doi:10.3102/0013189X019001003
- Dale, R., & Robertson, S. (Eds.). (2009). *Globalisation and Europeanisation in education*. Oxford: Symposium Books.
- De Grauwe, A. (2007). Transforming school supervision into a tool for quality improvement. *International Review of Education, 53*(5), 709–714. doi:10.1007/s11159-007-9057-9
- Dedering, K., & Müller, S. (2011). School improvement through inspections? First empirical insights from Germany. *Journal of Educational Change, 12*(3), 301–322. doi:10.1007/s10833-010-9151-9
- DiMaggio, P. J., & Powell, W. W. (1983). The iron cage revisited: Institutional isomorphism and collective rationality in organizational fields. *American Sociological Review, 48*(2), 147–160. doi:10.2307/2095101
- Elstad, E. (2009). Schools which are named, shamed and blamed by the media: School accountability in Norway. *Educational Assessment, Evaluation and Accountability, 21*(2), 173–189. doi:10.1007/s11092-009-9076-0
- Fitzgerald, T. (2012). Documents and documentary analysis. In A. Briggs, M. Coleman, & M. Morrison (Eds.), *Research methods in educational leadership and management* (pp. 296–308). Los Angeles, CA: Sage.
- Government Act. (1860). *Lov om almueskolevæsenet på landet* [Act of public rural schools]. Retrieved from <http://www.nb.no/nbsok/nb/5af17be02e2d51301098b02182119a68#1>
- Government Act. (1998). *Act of 17 July 1998 no. 61 relating to primary and secondary education and training*. Retrieved from [https://www.regjeringen.no/globalassets/upload/kd/vedlegg/grunnskole/dokumenter/educationact\\_with\\_amendments\\_entered2013.pdf](https://www.regjeringen.no/globalassets/upload/kd/vedlegg/grunnskole/dokumenter/educationact_with_amendments_entered2013.pdf)
- Grek, S. (2015). Inspectors in Europe – SICI and the role of meditative work. In S. Grek & J. Lindgren (Eds.), *Governing by inspection* (pp. 38–57). Oxon: Routledge.
- Gunnulfson, A. E., & Møller, J. (2017). National testing: Gains or strains? School leaders' responses to policy demands. *Leadership and Policy in Schools, 16*(3), 455–474. doi:10.1080/15700763.2016.1205200
- Gunter, H., Grimaldi, E., Hall, D., & Serpieri, R. (Eds.). (2016). *New public management and the reform of education: European lessons for policy and practice*. Oxon: Routledge.
- Hall, J. B. (2016). *State school inspection: The Norwegian example* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). University of Oslo, Oslo.
- Hall, J. B. (2017a). Examining school inspectors and educational directors within the organisation of school inspection policy: Perceptions and views. *Scandinavian Journal of Educational Research, 61*(1), 112–126. doi:10.1080/00313831.2015.1120234
- Hall, J. B. (2017b). “Governing by templates” through new modes of school inspection in Norway. *Journal of Educational Change, 18*(2), 161–182. doi:10.1007/s10833-017-9295-y



- Hall, J. B. (2017c, April). "Moving through the checkout line"? *Legal standards, performance and state school inspection policy*. Paper presented at the 2017 Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (AERA), San Antonio, TX.
- Hall, J. B., & Sivesind, K. (2015). State school inspection policy in Norway and Sweden (2002–2012): A reconfiguration of governing modes? *Journal of Education Policy*, 30(3), 429–458. doi:10.1080/02680939.2014.945488
- Hansson, S. O. (1991). *Idéer om reformism. Texter av Thomas Humphrey Marshall, Adam Przeworski, Gøsta Esping-Andersen, Jon Elster* [Ideas on reformism. Texts by Thomas H. Marshall, Adam Przeworski, Gøsta Esping-Andersen, Jon Elster]. Stockholm: Tidsens.
- Hardy, C., & Maguire, S. (2008). Institutional entrepreneurship. In R. Greenwood, C. Oliver, R. Suddaby & K. Sahlin (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of organizational institutionalism* (pp. 198–217). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Helgøy, I., & Homme, A. (2006). Policy tools and institutional change: Comparing educational policies in Norway, Sweden and England. *Journal of Public Policy*, 26(2), 141–165. doi:10.1017/S0143814X0600050X
- Holm, V., & Møller, J. (2016). Tilsyn – en hjelp i forebyggende arbeid med skolemiljøet? [Inspection: Support in preventive work in school environment?]. In I. K. Andenæs & J. Møller (Eds.), *Retten i skolen– Mellom pedagogikk, jus og politikk* [Legal issues in schools: Between pedagogy, law, and politics] (pp. 263–278). Oslo: Universitetsforlaget.
- Hood, C. (2007). Intellectual obsolescence and intellectual makeovers: Reflections on the tools of government after two decades. *Governance*, 20(1), 127–144. doi:10.1111/gove.2007.20.issue-1
- Huber, S. G. (2011). School governance in Switzerland: Tensions between new roles and old traditions. *Educational Management Administration and Leadership*, 39(4), 469–485. doi:10.1177/1741143211405349
- Jepperson, R. (1991). Institutions, institutional effects and institutionalism. In W. W. Powell & P. J. DiMaggio (Eds.), *The new institutionalism in organizational analysis* (pp. 143–163). Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Karseth, B., Møller, J., & Aasen, P. (2013). *Reformtakter: Om fornyelse og stabilitet i grunnsopplæringen* [Reform measures: On renewal and stability in compulsory education]. Oslo: Universitetsforlaget.
- Kjærnsli, M., & Jensen, F. (Eds.). (2016). *Stø kurs – Norske elevers kompetanse i naturfag, matematikk og lesing i PISA 2015* [On track: Norwegian students' competency in science, numeracy and reading in PISA 2015]. Oslo: Universitetsforlaget.
- Lawn, M., & Grek, S. (2012). *Europeanizing education: Governing a new policy space*. Oxford: Symposium Books.
- Lindgren, J. (2015). The front and back stages of Swedish school inspection: Opening the black box of judgment. *Scandinavian Journal of Educational Research*, 59(1), 58–76. doi:10.1080/00313831.2013.838803
- Lindgren, J., Hult, A., Segerholm, C., & Rönnerberg, L. (2012). Mediating school inspection: Key dimensions and keywords in agency text production 2003–2010. *Education Inquiry*, 3(4), 569–590. doi:10.3402/edui.v3i4.22055
- March, J. G., & Olsen, J. P. (2010). *Rediscovering institutions – The organizational basis of politics*. New York, NY: Simon and Schuster/Free Press.
- Mediås, O. A. (1996). *Skoledirektørembetet i Norge – 1860–1992* [The office of the school directors in Norway – 1860–1992]. Oslo: Ministry of Education, Research and Church Affairs.
- Møller, J. (2014). Ledelse som masteridé i norsk skole sett i et internasjonalt perspektiv [Leadership as a master idea in Norwegian education viewed in an international perspective]. In K. A. Røvik, E. M. Furu, & T. V. Eilertsen (Eds.), *Reformideer i norsk skole: Spredning, oversettelse og implementering* [Reform ideas in Norwegian education: Proliferation, translation and implementation] (pp. 147–166). Oslo: Cappelen.
- Neave, G. (1998). The evaluative state reconsidered. *European Journal of Education*, 33(3), 265–284.

- Nihlfors, E., & Johansson, O. (Eds). (2014). *Skolledare i mötet mellan nationella mål och lokal policy* [School leaders in between national goals and local policy]. Malmö: Gleerups.
- The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training (UDIR). (2007). *Procedures for county governors' offices inspection in compliance with the Education Act and the Private School Act - Regular state inspection*. Oslo: The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training.
- The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training (UDIR). (2010). *Instructions for regular state inspection 2010/2011. Theme: Students' psycho-social environment*. Oslo: Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training .
- The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training (UDIR). (2013a). *Inspection in the educational sector - A handbook in inspection methods (Version 1.1.)*. Oslo: Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training .
- The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training (UDIR). (2013b). *Methods for inspection - A handbook of inspection methods in compliance with the Pre-School Act and the Education Act*. Oslo: Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training . Retrieved from <http://www.udir.no/contentassets/2f75a647ad154220943175f1834a4641/metodehandbok-tilsyn.pdf>
- The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. (1989). Ekspertvurdering fra OECD [Expert assessment from OECD]. In Kultur- Og Vitenskapsdepartementet, Kirke- Og Undervisningsdepartementet & O. F. K. O. Ø. S. (The OECD) (Eds.), *OECD-vurdering av norsk utdanningspolitikk. Andre del* [Reviews of national policies for education. Norway. Second section] (pp. 109–196). Oslo: Aschehoug.
- Ottesen, E. (2013). Grunnleggende ferdigheter og individuell vurdering - mellom regulering og profesjonsmakt [Basic skills and individual assessment – Between regulation and professional empowerment]. In B. Karseth, J. Møller, & P. Aasen (Eds), *Reformtakter: Om fornyelse og stabilitet i grunnsopplæringen* [Reform measures: On renewal and stability in compulsory education] (pp. 119–134). Oslo: Universitetsforlaget.
- Ottesen, E., & Møller, J. (2016). Organisational routines – The interplay of legal standards and professional discretion. *European Educational Research Journal*, 15(4), 428–446. doi:10.1177/1474904116638853
- Ozga, J. (2000). *Policy research in educational settings: Contested terrain*. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Ozga, J., Dahler-Larsen, P., Segerholm, C., & Simola, H. (Eds.). (2011). *Fabricating quality in education - Data and governance in Europe*. London: Routledge.
- Ozga, J., Segerholm, C., & Lawn, M. (2015). The history and development of the inspectorates in England, Sweden and Scotland. In S. Grek & J. Lindgren (Eds.), *Governing by inspection* (pp. 58–73). Oxon: Routledge.
- Perryman, J. (2006). Panoptic performativity and school inspection regimes: Disciplinary mechanisms and life under special measures. *Journal of Education Policy*, 21(2), 147–161. doi:10.1080/02680930500500138
- Perryman, J. (2007). Inspection and emotion. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 37(2), 173–190. doi:10.1080/03057640701372418
- Pollitt, C., & Bouckaert, G. (2011). *Public management reform: A comparative analysis - New Public Management, governance and the neo-Weberian state*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Power, M. (1997). *The audit society - Rituals of verification*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Regulation. (2006). *Forskrift til opplæringsloven FOR-2006-06-23-724* [Regulation Pertaining to the Education Act, 1998]. Oslo: The Ministry of Education and Research.
- Rönnerberg, L. (2011). Exploring the intersection of marketisation and central state control through Swedish national school inspection. *Education Inquiry*, 2(4), 689–707. doi:10.3402/edui.v2i4.22007
- Scott, J. (1990). *A matter of record. Documentary sources in social research*. Cambridge, MA: Polity Press.
- Segerholm, C. (2012, September 18–21). *Inspection and policy brokering: Europe in Sweden?* Symposium Paper presented at the European Conference on Educational Research (ECER), NW 23: Cadiz, Spain.

- Sivesind, K. (2008). *Reformulating reform: Curriculum history revisited* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). University of Oslo, Oslo.
- Sivesind, K. (2009). Juss + ped = sant? Om felles nasjonalt tilsyn i Oslo og Akershus 2008 [Law and pedagogy = truth? On regular inspection in Oslo and Akershus counties 2008]. *Acta Didactica No. 1*. Oslo: Department of Teacher Education and School Research, University of Oslo.
- Sivesind, K., & Bachmann, K. (2011). Et felles nasjonalt tilsyn – om forholdet mellom statlig styring og faglig skjønn [National regular inspection – On the relationship between state governing and professional judgment]. In J. Møller & E. Ottesen (Eds.), *Rektor som leder og sjef – om styring, ledelse og kunnskapsutvikling* [School principal as leader and supervisor] (pp. 51–73). Oslo: Universitetsforlaget.
- Sivesind, K., Skedsmo, G., & Hall, J. B. (2016). Et felles nasjonalt tilsyn: Reformbaner og scenarier [Regular state school inspection: Reform trajectories and scenarios]. In K. Andenæs & J. Møller (Eds.), *Retten i skolen – Mellom pedagogikk, jus og politikk* [Legal issues in schools: Between pedagogy, law, and politics] (pp. 99–122). Oslo: Universitetsforlaget.
- Skedsmo, G. (2009). *School governing in transition. Perspectives, purposes and perceptions of evaluation policy* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). University of Oslo, Oslo.
- Skedsmo, G., & Møller, J. (2016). Governing by new performance expectations in Norwegian schools. In H. Gunter, D. Hall, R. Serpieri, & E. Grimaldi (Eds.), *New public management and the reform of education: European lessons for policy and practice* (pp. 53–65). Oxon: Routledge.
- Spillane, J. P. (2004). *Standards deviation: How schools misunderstand education policy*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Steiner-Khamsi, G. (2010). The politics and economics of comparison. *Comparative Education Review*, 54(3), 323–342. doi:10.1086/653047
- Steiner-Khamsi, G., & Waldow, F. (Eds.). (2012). *World Yearbook of Education 2012: Policy borrowing and lending in education*. London: Routledge.
- Supovitz, J. A., & Weinbaum, E. H. (Eds.). (2008). *The implementation gap: Understanding reform in high schools*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Telhaug, A. O. (1997). *Utdanningsreformene – Oversikt og analyse* [Education reforms: Overview and analysis]. Oslo: Didakta.
- Weick, K. E. (1979). *The social psychology of organizing*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.
- White Paper no. 20. (2013). *Meld. St. 20 (2012–2013) På rett vei – Kvalitet og mangfold i fellesskolen* [On the right track: Quality and diversity in comprehensive school]. Oslo: The Ministry of Education and Research.
- White Paper no. 21. (2017). *Meld. St. 21 (2016–2017) Lærelyst – tidlig innsats og kvalitet i skolen* [Desire to learn – Early intervention and quality in schools]. Oslo: The Ministry of Education and Research.
- White Paper no. 37. (1991). *Meld. St. 37 (1990–1991) Organisering og styring i utdanningssektoren* [Organising and governing in the educational sector]. Oslo: Ministry of Education, Research, and Church Affairs.